

14 MAR 1996
Sweden-Visit
SWEDISH ROYAL COUPLE LEAVE FOR SABAH

KUALA LUMPUR, March 14 (Bernama) -- Sweden's King Carl Gustaf and Queen Silvia left for a three-day visit to Sabah today as part of their five-day state visit to Malaysia.

They were given a farewell reception by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Najihah at Parliament House before departing from the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport in Subang.

The couple's son Prince Carl Philip, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed, who is minister-in-attendance, also attended the reception.

Earlier, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali called on the royal couple at Carcosa Seri Negara to bid them farewell.

On arrival at Parliament Square, King Carl inspected a guard-of-honour mounted by four officers and 103 men from the Sungai Besi-based Ceremonial Battalion of the Royal Malay Regiment under the command of Mejar Rafizi Shariff.

The regiment's central band commanded by Lt Norman Kamarudin played the Swedish and Malaysian national anthems.

The Swedish monarch arrived here on Tuesday for a five-day state visit to Malaysia.

In Kota Kinabalu, the royal couple were accorded a red carpet welcome at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport old terminal.

On hand to receive them were by Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee and wife Datin Stella Yong.

The royal entourage proceeded to the Sabah Foundation building in Likas, near here, where they were given a colourful traditional welcome in true Malaysian hospitality.

They were later feted to a state luncheon at the foundation's revolving restaurant on the 18th floor of the building attended by state cabinet ministers, assistant ministers and senior government officers.

King Carl and Queen Silvia will leave for Tawau in the east coast of Sabah at 1.35pm today for a private visit to the world-renowned flora- and fauna-rich Danum Valley.

On Saturday, the royal couple will return to Kota Kinabalu and visit Manukan Island before leaving for Bangkok via Kuala Lumpur, enroute home.

-- BERNAMA
KG LDB